






The Role of Regional Communities in Realizing SDGs for Indonesian Migrant Workers in Hong Kong

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Abstract. Violations of human rights, especially women, are of particular concern today. This also includes human rights protection for Indonesian women who work as Indonesian Migrant Workers (PMI) abroad. The many cases of human rights violations that occur to PMI make it an experience to always improve. The SDGs indicators mandate the 10th indicator which states reduced inequality and the 16th indicator which states peace, justice and strong institutions. This component is not only a priority for people within the country, but also for all Indonesian people, even those abroad. Many stakeholders are able to support the achievement of the SDGs indicators, one of which is through the formation of regional communities. This research aims to analyze the role of regional communities in realizing SDGs for PMI in Hong Kong. The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive research using direct observation data collection techniques, semi-structured interviews, and literature review. The results of this research show that the role of forming regional communities at PMI in Hong Kong to realize the SDGs is very important. It is proven that regional communities can have a very vital role in helping resolve the problems faced by PMI in Hong Kong. Conditions that enable PMIs to facilitate helping each other are regional ties that strengthen the inseparable values of togetherness and family. Therefore, the PMI regional community in Hong Kong can carry out its role as a policy creator, facilitator, coordinator, and implementer in supporting the realization of the SDGs through reducing inequality, realizing peace, justice and strong institutions.

Keywords: Indonesian migrant workers, regional communities, advocacy, social inequality

1 Introduction

The issue of human rights violations against migrant workers has been widely discussed in recent times, especially during and after the pandemic. Human rights, usually called human rights, are the basic principles that regulate universal human freedom, which makes people appreciate and respect each other so that there is no discrimina-

tion between each other [1]. With the freedom of human rights to determine their work and seeing the lack of job opportunities in Indonesia, many people choose to try their luck in other countries or more precisely in neighboring countries [2]. People who move or go from their own country to a country where they work and hope to get a sufficient salary abroad are called migrant workers [3]. There are inequality factors, both social and economic, which trigger everyone to eventually become migrant workers abroad. This high gap is certainly one of the focuses in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) concept which consists of 17 indicators, namely 1) no poverty, 2) no hunger, 3) healthy and prosperous life, 4) quality education, 5) gender equality, 6) clean water and adequate sanitation, 7) clean and affordable energy, 8) decent work and economic growth, 9) industry, innovation and infrastructure, 10) reduced inequality, 11) sustainable cities and settlements, 12) responsible consumption and production, 13) handling climate change, 14) ocean ecosystems, 15) land ecosystems, 16) peace, justice and strong institutions, and 17) strengthening the means of implementing and revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development [4]. In relation to migrant workers, of course the government in realizing the SDGs must not only focus on the people within its territory, but must also pay attention to all people who work in other countries (one of which is migrant workers) [5] [6].

Many people are interested in this job because the salary they earn as a migrant worker in another country is greater than working domestically [7]. Migration by Indonesian workers had occurred before Indonesian independence, namely since 1890. At that time, the Dutch East Indies Government placed workers on a contract basis to Suriname, South America. The Dutch government sent several contract workers from Sunda, Java, Madura and also Batak to work on plantations in Suriname [8] [9]. These workers were hired to replace slaves from Africa who had previously been freed as a form of abolition of slavery. Due to this release, Suriname's plantations became abandoned, which also had an impact on its economy [10]. Currently, one option is to become a migrant worker. Some people can do it to improve their welfare. The existence of this work has a positive impact, one of which is reducing the unemployment rate in Indonesia. Meanwhile, this also has a negative impact, namely the risk of behavior that violates human rights for migrant workers. On the other hand, conditions of social and economic inequality cause Indonesian people to choose to become Indonesian migrant workers abroad [8] [3] [11]. The following is data on the number of Indonesian migrant workers from year to year which can be seen in the graph as follows:

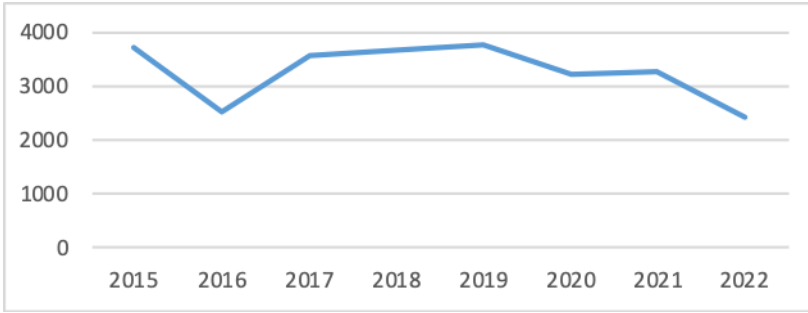


Fig. 1. Data on the number of Indonesian migrant workers from 2015 to 2022

From the data above, it can be seen that the number of Indonesian migrant workers from year to year is very large. It decreased from 2020 to 2022 due to the Covid-19 case which had an impact on the number of Indonesian migrant workers who were able to work abroad [10] [12]. The number of migrant workers internationally continues to increase from year to year. The high number of migrant workers has created dependency between countries in various fields, one of which is the economic sector [9] [13]. Migrant workers are a significant foreign exchange contributor to the country [14]. Based on data from the National Agency for the Placement and Protection of Indonesian Migrant Workers, the total remittances for migrant workers reached IDR 77.47 trillion from January to September 2022. Behind the large amount of money received, there are also many cases of discrimination suffered by working PMIs there. Many migrant workers experience sexual harassment, violence, delayed salaries, and some are even denied salaries by their superiors [15]. Due to this incident, the UN finally established International Labor in Malaysia, specifically for cases of employer violence against workers [16] [17]. Apart from that, the Indonesian government has carried out its duties to protect migrant workers through the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in various countries with large numbers of migrant workers, such as in Hong Kong. Existing data shows that the number of Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong has increased from year to year [18]. The number of Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong can be seen in the table below.

Table 1. Data on the number of Indonesian migrant workers based on the distribution of destination countries

Locations	2016	2027	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Malaysia	1862	1876	1902	1883	1633	1628	1670
Arab Saudi	969	963	961	961	833	833	837
Hong Kong	132	178	208	250	231	281	339
Taiwan	177	208	264	328	283	290	331
Singapura	106	98	99	103	88	91	95

From the data above, it shows that Hong Kong is one of the destination countries for Indonesian migrant workers that is most sought after by the Indonesian people. This is of course prone to human rights violations occurring among Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong [19]. This large number of cases certainly requires strong institutions to reduce disparities for migrant workers. One of the most important things in supporting this is a strong regional feeling to form strong institutions. Conditions that are far from their families cause migrant workers to need a place or forum to support and share with each other. Therefore, this research aims to analyze the role of regional communities in supporting the realization of the SDGs, especially the 10th indicator, namely reducing inequality and the 16th indicator of peace, justice and strong institutions for Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong [20].

2 Method

This research uses qualitative descriptive methods and approaches with data collection techniques using direct observation techniques and structured interview techniques using interview guides and literature review and documentation techniques [21] [22]. The research was conducted on Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong, which is one of the countries with the largest number of migrant workers from Indonesia. Therefore, this research was also carried out at the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hong Kong. The research subjects or informants in this research are parties directly involved in the advocacy process and the formation of regional communities for Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong. The technique for determining informants in this research uses a purposive sampling technique. Direct observations were made of the activities of Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong in forming regional communities. At the same time conducting interviews with the Consul General of the Republic of Indonesia and his employees in Hong Kong as well as Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong itself. Meanwhile, the data analysis technique in this research uses the Miles and Huberman model which consists of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, the stages of which are carried out continuously and are interrelated [21] [22].

3 Result and Discussion

Research data shows that the number of migrant workers in Indonesia has increased quite significantly from year to year. This causes various problems experienced by Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong. The establishment of regional communities for Indonesian migrant workers actually has good benefits in supporting the reduction of disparities in migrant workers. The sense of similarity and the same sense of ownership that is tied to one regional origin shows solidarity in helping to resolve the various problems experienced. Apart from that, the presence of support from the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hong Kong also strengthens and supports the existence of regional communities that are formed to collaborate in re-

solving various problems experienced by Indonesian migrant workers [23]. One of the regional communities formed by Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong is the "Sedulur Reog di Hong Kong" community, which is a regional community of Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong who come from Ponorogo Regency. This community is one of the regional communities that was formed because of the strong feelings of Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong from Ponorogo Regency [24].

In fact, this community is able to survive various conditions to become a strong institution in supporting the realization of the SDGs. This community has been legally recognized by the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hong Kong which can carry out activities to support reducing the inequality that occurs among Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong. From the data and analysis carried out, the community in realizing reduced inequality, peace, justice and responsive institutions in accordance with the realization of the SDGs has at least carried out its role which can be described in more detail as follows.

The first role is as a policy creator, in carrying out its role this community has created informal rules or policies [25]. This means that the rules or policies set are only binding on migrant workers who are members of this community. As one form of the policy creator's role, this is a routine contribution rule for each community member every month. Which in carrying out this role is of course the result of a joint agreement. This contribution rule is required as a form of joint solidarity which will later be used for operational activities carried out jointly, including compensation activities for underprivileged communities in Indonesia whose distribution is in collaboration with various non-governmental organizations and ex-migrant workers who have returned to the Regency. Ponorogo. Every rule set in this community is carried out in a decision-making process by emphasizing deliberation and consensus among community members. The decision-making process is carried out either directly (meeting every joint holiday) or indirectly (using WhatsApp groups). Currently active members in this community consist of 67 people.

This community has also carried out its role as a facilitator [26]. As clear evidence of carrying out this role is the involvement of this community in helping Indonesian migrant workers, not only those from Ponorogo Regency but all migrant workers in Hong Kong. One of them is picking up migrant workers who come to Hong Kong. This facilitator is run as a form of assistance for migrant workers, especially those who are coming to Hong Kong for the first time. Not knowing the direction or location is a problem that is often experienced by most migrant workers, especially new migrant workers. Therefore, this community is here to help migrant workers so that undesirable things don't happen to them. This form of role is also carried out by the community in collaboration with the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia to provide assistance to migrant workers, especially those from Ponorogo who are having problems, such as processing passports that have expired, processing permits in Hong Kong, processing visas, etc. Becoming a bridge for all kinds of matters needed by migrant workers in the hope of helping with the various problems they face. Various forms of assistance can be provided through hotlines or existing community social media for fast response to actions that can be taken.

The next role carried out by this community is coordinator [27]. The role of coordinator by this community is not yet visible, because so far whatever activities will be carried out by this community must be approved by the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hong Kong as the official representative of the Indonesian government. Many of the activities carried out are an extension of the activities of the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia. This is also related to the fact that this community is classified as a newly formed community, where there are also regional communities that have been formed for a long time. In fact, this community has learned a lot from other communities that have been around for a long time. Therefore, this community is more often a follower than coordinating with other communities. However, the role of coordinator is carried out by the community only within the internal environment of the community. For example, coordinating community members to participate in activities held by the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia.

Next is the role as implementer [28]. This community has of course implemented many of the policies and programs of the government, both the Indonesian government and the Hong Kong government where they work. Various rules set by the government must be implemented by all Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong. Therefore, the presence of this community is very helpful for the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hong Kong to ensure that every migrant worker in Hong Kong complies with the applicable regulations. Through this community, it certainly makes it easier and helps the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia to provide information about all the policies that have been determined quickly and easily. Information spread through this community is proven to be faster, so that the implementation of all established rules and policies can be implemented and obeyed by migrant workers. Including the rules applied to overcome various problems faced by migrant workers. The community is present by paying attention to all applicable policies and regulations, and providing assistance to migrant workers to solve the problems they face. Of course, in its implementation it must always collaborate with the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia in Hong Kong.

Through these various roles, this community has supported reducing disparities, especially for Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong who come from Ponorogo district. The formation of this community has in fact created a strong institution to support the achievement of the SDGs. It is hoped that the presence of this community will be able to contribute to reducing the gap that occurs among migrant workers. Especially being away from family and closest people, this community can embrace being the closest party when needed while in Hong Kong. Problems that often arise are exploitation and unilateral contract termination. Through this community which is connected to a WhatsApp group, it makes it easier for migrant workers to connect with each other. There are many cases experienced by migrant workers, one of which is unilateral contract termination, the most common reason being language limitations. This community exists to provide training and assistance to migrant workers who have problems. Connecting migrant workers with and through communities is actually able to reduce disparities, so that the formation of these communities can support the achievement of the SDGs.

4 Conclusion

The results of the analysis from this research show that to realize the SDGs, especially the 10th indicator, namely reducing inequality and the 16th indicator, namely peace, justice and strong institutions, especially for Indonesian migrant workers, it is absolutely necessary to form regional communities. From the results of this research, a regional community was formed, especially the "Seduler Reog di Hong Kong" community, which is a community for Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong, especially those from Ponorogo Regency. From the analysis of various roles, including policy creator, facilitator, coordinator and implementer, this community exists to be a forum for Indonesian migrant workers to help and support each other in every condition. Through this community, Indonesian migrant workers feel like they have a new family, just like their own family in their hometown. There is great hope that this community will be able to contribute to reducing disparities, especially for Indonesian migrant workers in Hong Kong. The suggestions from this research are that regional communities must be formed to be able to embrace all Indonesian migrant workers who work abroad. Apart from that, in carrying out its activities and activities, it always collaborates with various related parties to get support.

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6 Author Contributions

The authors consisted of five lecturers and three students who contributed to writing the article. Article writing is separated into several research and writing stages which are completed in approximately 4 (four) months. The first author was tasked with coordinating the team in carrying out the research. The second and third authors were tasked with compiling interview guidelines and observation guidelines. The fourth is tasked with collecting research data. Meanwhile, the fifth author assisted in data collection and also processed the data obtained in the research. The five authors provide assistance and guidance to student authors. Student writers are in charge of the data collection process in the field. After the research process is complete, all authors analyze the data together to draw conclusions.

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